

Coastal Horizons - Opioid Treatment Program – Wilmington, NC

MEMO to OTP Patients 3/13/2020

We are all concerned about the potential spread of the “coronavirus 19 disease” or COVID 19. This is not a time for panic, but rather a time to take the tried and true precautions to prevent the spread of any communicable disease. Let’s not forget that we are in the middle of a flu outbreak as well.

The tried and true precautions to prevent the spread of infectious disease are:

- 1. Wash your hands frequently throughout the day with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. If you are unable to wash your hands, use hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol.**
- 2. Avoid touching your face (mouth, nose, eyes).**
- 3. Avoid close contact with people who have respiratory diseases and are actively coughing.**
- 4. STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK!*****
- 5. Clean frequently touched surfaces.**

***Number 4 on this list may be difficult as a patient coming daily to receive either Methadone or Buprenorphine (Suboxone or Subutex) for your medication needs. So, **please follow these directions:**

***If you have come to the clinic and you have an active cough, fever or shortness of breath, please see a nurse immediately to get a mask to wear.**

***If you have a fever and/or are coughing, call and speak to one of our nurses in advance of your arrival at the clinic to explain your situation. We will make accommodations for medicating as necessary. If you are required to stay home due to closure of your child’s school or your having come in contact with someone who may be infected with COVID 19, please advise one of our nurses.**

***Our plan is to open an additional hour of dispensing from 10:30-11:30a (7 days/week) for those patients who are sick, or have high-risk health conditions, or who are over 65 years old. If you think that you qualify for this time slot, please contact nursing to let them approve you for this special dispensing arrangement. Medical Staff will also be evaluating the need for any specialized take home requests tied to health concerns.**

We are making every effort to keep Coastal Horizons as “germ-limited” as possible. All our staff, as well as common areas, are going to be equipped with hand sanitizer. We are placing orders so that all staff will have germicidal wipes in their offices as well. Gloves are available for use when necessary.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a member of the Medical-Nursing Staff or other staff member. There will be updates on the www.coastalhorizons.org website, text messaging, as well as on Facebook. In addition, the best website for COVID 19 information and updates is www.cdc.gov. Beware of rumors and “fake news” which is already circulating on social media.

Let’s all hope that this pandemic does NOT get a stronghold in our area. Rest assured, however, that we are constantly tracking the situation and revising our policies and procedures based on current assessments.

OTP Continuity Plan / Disaster Plan – Coastal Horizons

Revised 3/13/2020

Guiding Principle: IF for any reason it becomes difficult or impossible to provide normal and safe OTP dispensing services at the designated licensed location at 615 Shipyard Blvd, Wilmington, NC, THEN Coastal Horizons will take actions to provide continuity of care and to best enable OTP patients to safely access those services and medications.

This would most likely be caused by some type of “disaster”; disasters may include things such as storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, power outages, theft, terrorism, cyber-attacks, disease outbreaks, etc.)

Plan of Action: Coastal Horizons will prepare for & respond to these “disasters” in the following ways:

Communication with Authorities – Communication will be made (as needed) with the SOTA (State Opioid Treatment Authority), Federal SAMHSA/CSAT, DEA & local authorities to ensure that procedures are followed and approved to handle the disaster in a safe and orderly manner.

Supplies – Nursing Staff and others will work to ensure that adequate (and extra) supplies are ordered and subsequently “on hand” to handle situations where, eg, program-wide take home medication is needed to be given. This will include things such as medication, take home bottles & caps, medication lockboxes, etc..

Staffing – Priorities will be to ensure that staff are protected and safe to the extent possible, and that we have adequate staffing prepared for handling various changes in service delivery, eg, dispensing nurses and support staff, providers available for teletherapy and prescribing, etc..

Dispensing – As long as it is safe to do so, we continue with dispensing as usual. However, in preparation for situations worsening, we evaluate the need for things such as requesting exceptions for take home medication, creating alternate dosing hours, risk stratifying the patient population to assist those especially vulnerable for additional care measures, and making possible changes to decongest lobbies and groups.

Central Registry – We work to maintain this registry to allow us to communicate with other OTP clinics, OTP patients, and the State / SOTA – and to have access to real-time, updated patient & clinic information.

Technology – We utilize technology, website & social media to communicate with the public – as well as to provide services via telehealth, and to publish updates on services and how to access them.

Networking – We work with our existing local networks to coordinate care – both urgent and emergent, including but not being limited to: Cape Fear HealthNet, NHRMC/Hospitals, Local Health Departments, DSS, Law Enforcement, Courts & Detention Centers, UNCW, County Schools & others.